

STARBLAZER

FANTASY FICTION IN PICTURES

No. 191

26p

The illustration features a man with a stern expression, wearing a red suit with a white strap and a yellow headband. He is holding a large, gold-colored, multi-barreled handgun. The background is a dark blue night sky with stars and a cityscape with lit-up buildings and a flying vehicle.

CARTER'S LAW

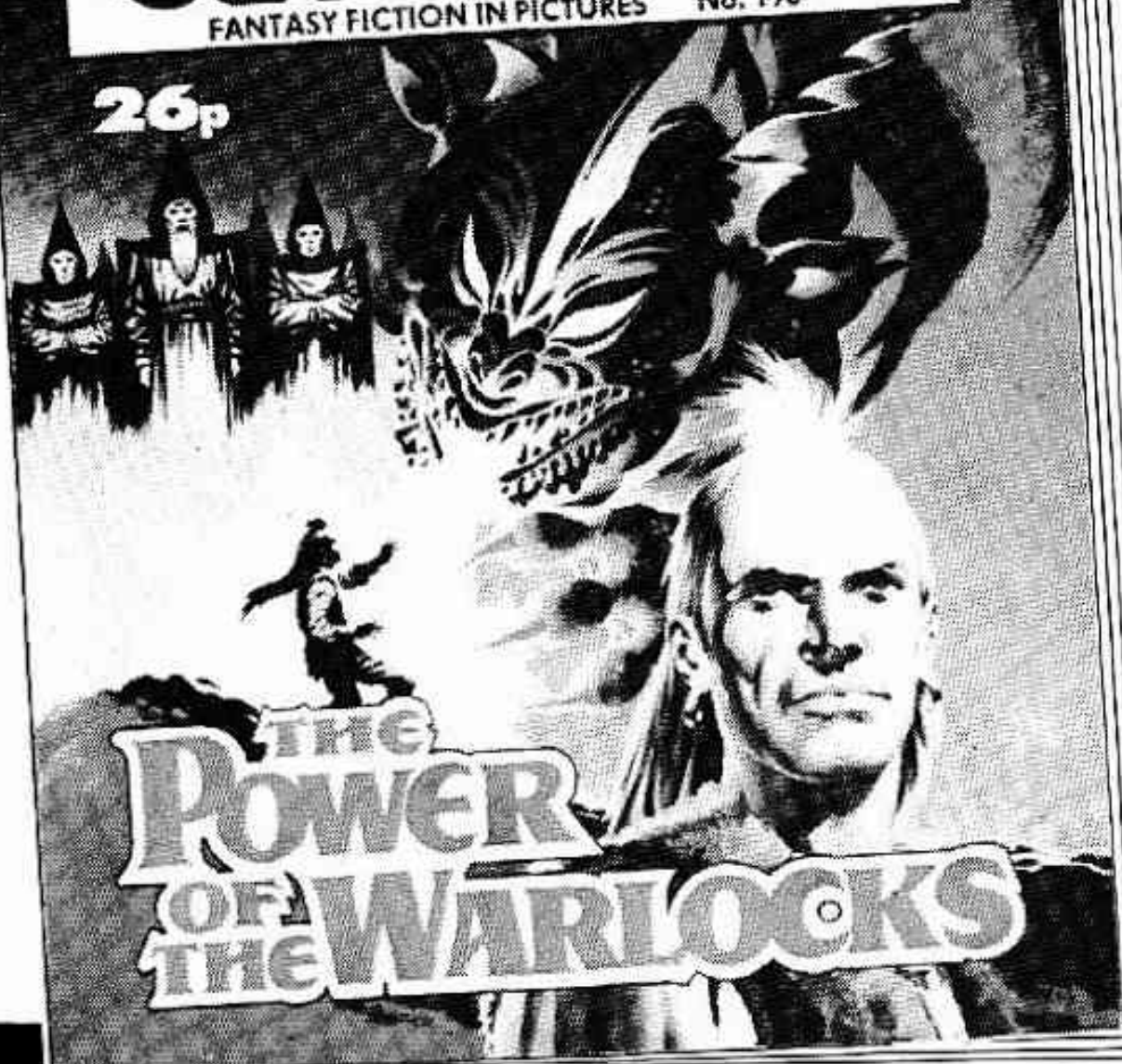
**DON'T
MISS**

**THIS MONTH'S OTHER
ACTION-PACKED
ADVENTURE**

STARBLAZER

FANTASY FICTION IN PICTURES No. 190

26p



**THE
POWER
OF
THE WARLOCKS**

NOW ON SALE

CARTER'S LAW

BY THE 32ND CENTURY MANKIND HAD COLONISED THE OUTER REACHES OF THE GALAXY, BUT HUMAN GREED AND HATRED REMAINED. IT HAD TO BE DEALT WITH BY MEN LIKE CARTER, A SENIOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER IN THE GALACTIC DIVISION OF THE FEDERAL POLICE FORCE. CARTER WAS SPECIAL — HE WAS A MANDROID, PART HUMAN, PART MACHINE!

THE BOMB, HALLAN — WHERE IS IT? THE ONE YOU PLANTED NEAR A SCHOOL. LIKE THE ONE WHICH WENT OFF SIX MONTHS AGO. WHERE IS IT?

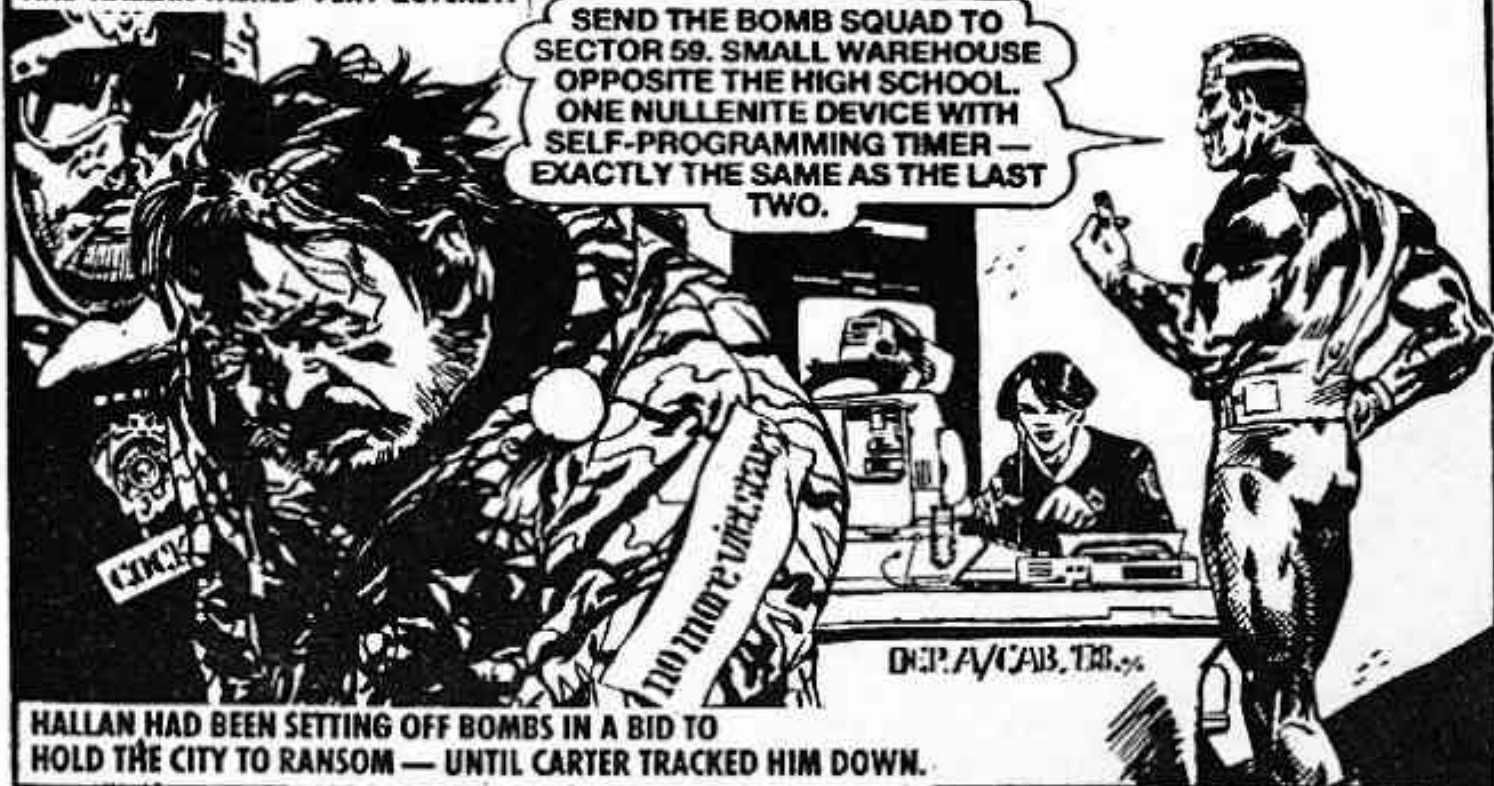
I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!





AND HALLAN TALKED VERY QUICKLY.

SEND THE BOMB SQUAD TO SECTOR 59. SMALL WAREHOUSE OPPOSITE THE HIGH SCHOOL. ONE NULLENITE DEVICE WITH SELF-PROGRAMMING TIMER — EXACTLY THE SAME AS THE LAST TWO.



HALLAN HAD BEEN SETTING OFF BOMBS IN A BID TO HOLD THE CITY TO RANSOM — UNTIL CARTER TRACKED HIM DOWN.

MULTI-METER NOTES

WHAT WERE YOU DOING WITH THAT SUSPECT, CARTER?

I TOOK HIM ON THE ROOF FOR SOME FRESH AIR.

THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOUR CRUDE AND BARBARIC METHODS. WE HAVE TRUTH SENSORS!

AND HOW LONG DO THEY TAKE? BY THE TIME THOSE CURSED MACHINES DECIDED WHAT WAS TRUE AND WHAT WASN'T, A WHOLE LOT OF KIDS WOULD HAVE BEEN COSMIC DUST.

OKAY, METAL MAN! I'VE ASSIGNED A FELLOW OFFICER TO WORK WITH YOU. IT'S THE LATEST POLICY FROM FEDERATION ADMINISTRATION. FROM NOW ON ALL INVESTIGATORS WILL WORK IN TEAMS — YOU INCLUDED! THAT'S ALL, CARTER. DISMISS!

UNKNOWN TO CARTER, PROBLEMS WERE BUILDING UP FOR THE FUTURE. ON CEROS, LIGHT YEARS AWAY, THERE WAS A HEAVILY GUARDED COMPLEX. SHROUDED IN SECRECY IT WAS SITUATED IN A DESERT REGION SOME DISTANCE FROM THE NEAREST COLONY ...



I CAN'T ... IT IS MORALLY WRONG! I INTEND TO MAKE A FULL REPORT ON PROJECT TERMINUS TO THE FEDERAL SCIENCE COMMISSION.

HE'LL TRY TO STOP ME MAKING THIS PUBLIC — HE HAS FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES. HE MAY EVEN TRY TO RUIN MY CAREER AND SEE I NEVER WORK IN ANOTHER LABORATORY AGAIN.

YOU'RE A BRILLIANT GENE BIOLOGIST, TAYLOR. IT'S JUST A PITY YOU HAVE TOO MANY SCRUPLES. GO!

TAYLOR LEFT RYKER'S OFFICE — A WORRIED MAN.

BUT RYKER DIDN'T INTEND RUINING TAYLOR'S CAREER ...

NO! ... PLEASE! YOU CAN'T DO THIS! IT'S ME — TAYLOR! I CREATED YOU!

... JUST ENDING IT!

THE FOLLOWING DAY, IN DEEP SPACE, THE NORTH STAR, A MEDIUM RANGE CARGO SHIP, PICKED UP SOMETHING ON THE SCANNERS...

OBJECT HAS A LOW ENERGY YIELD AND A MASS OF FIVE KILOGRAMS. IMPACT WITH SHIP IN THREE SECONDS. WE CANNOT TAKE EVASIVE ACTION.

A MERE PEBBLE, COMPUTER. THAT THING WON'T EVEN DENT OUR HULL.

BUT—

MAIN BULKHEAD HAS BEEN BREACHED! LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM FAILURE IMMINENT! CLEAR ALL DECKS. THIS IS NOT A DRILL!



THE SHIP IS BEING EATEN UP.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

A SUBSTANCE CONFORMING TO AN ORGANIC LIFE FORM IS EATING INTO THE STRUCTURE OF THIS SHIP.



MEANWHILE, FAR, FAR AWAY CARTER WAS ON HIS FIRST CASE WITH HIS NEW PARTNER—

I'M GOING IN, DOLAN!
GET READY TO COME
THROUGH THAT REAR
ENTRANCE.

AFFIRMATIVE!

THIS IS THE FEDERATION
POLICE! YOU'RE UNDER
ARREST!

WHAT THE...?!!!

121

THE CROOKS DECIDED TO FIGHT IT OUT — IT SEEMED A BETTER ALTERNATIVE THAN 15 YEARS ON A PENAL PLANET!



CARTER TOOK A PHOTON BOLT IN THE CHEST — RIGHT ON HIS PERMFLEX BODY ARMOUR...



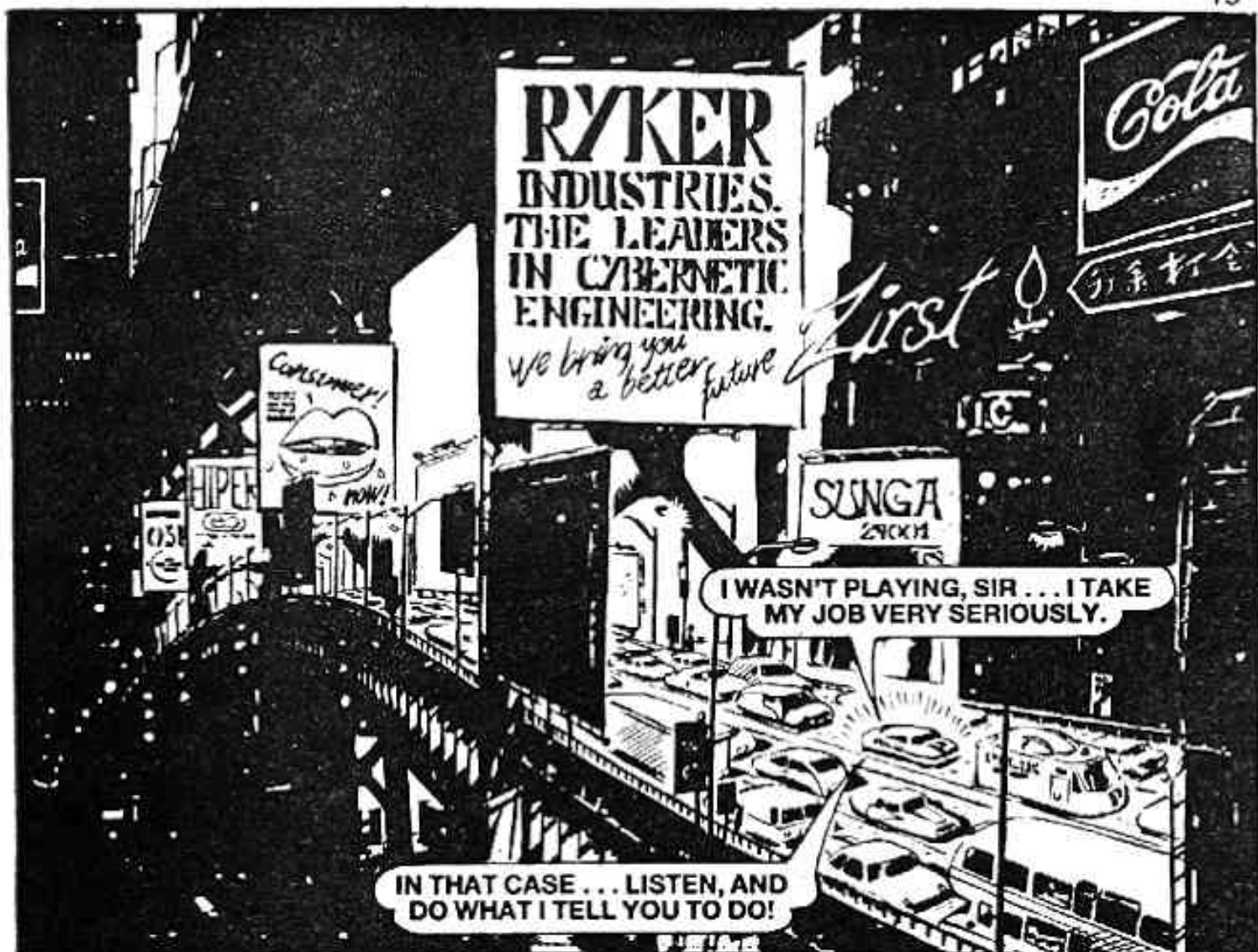


JUST THEN ...

DROP THOSE WEAPONS!







THEY DROVE TO THE SPACEPORT AFTER WRITING THE REPORT ON THEIR PRISONERS.

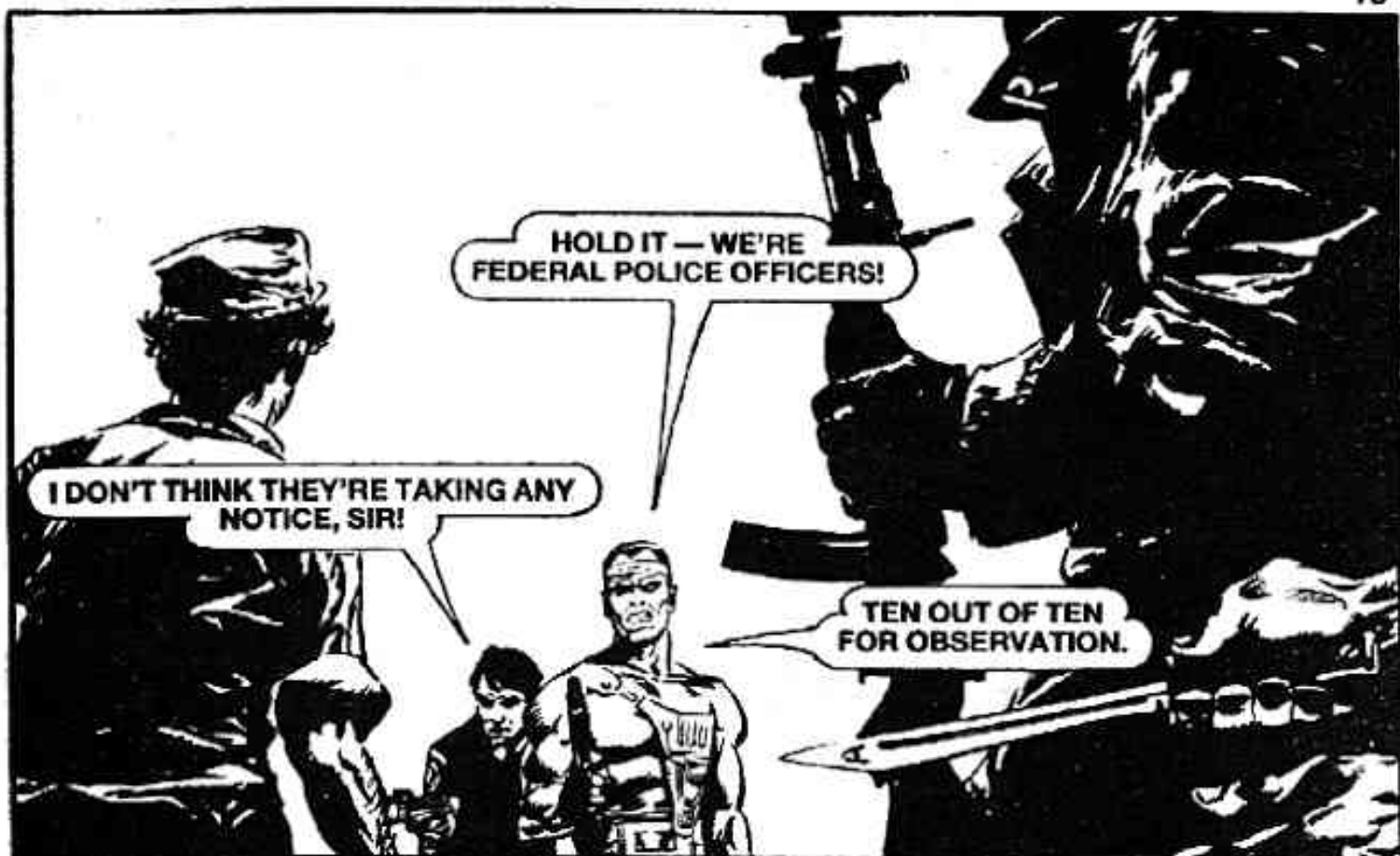


THE OBJECT WHICH ATTACKED THE "NORTH STAR" HAD BEEN TRACKED TO A SMALL PLANET IN THE CASSIOPEIA CONSTELLATION, ALRISHAN, AND WHEN THEY ARRIVED THERE.



CARTER HAD NO SOONER SPOKEN WHEN ...





**CARTER AND DOLAN FIRED AT THE GROUND IN
AN ATTEMPT TO STOP THE MOB.**





THE COLONY POLICE ACTED AS THOUGH THEY HADN'T HEARD A THING.

I'M CARTER — THIS IS INVESTIGATOR DOLAN. YOU'VE GOT A FULL SCALE RIOT OUT THERE!

WE NEED A LINE TO FEDERATION SECURITY HEADQUARTERS. WHERE'S YOUR COMMUNICATIONS ROOM?





THAT SHOULD SLOW YOU DOWN! I
DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOT INTO
YOU PEOPLE — AND I'M NOT
STAYING AROUND TO FIND OUT. AT
LEAST NOT WITHOUT SOME
BACKUP!

MEANWHILE...

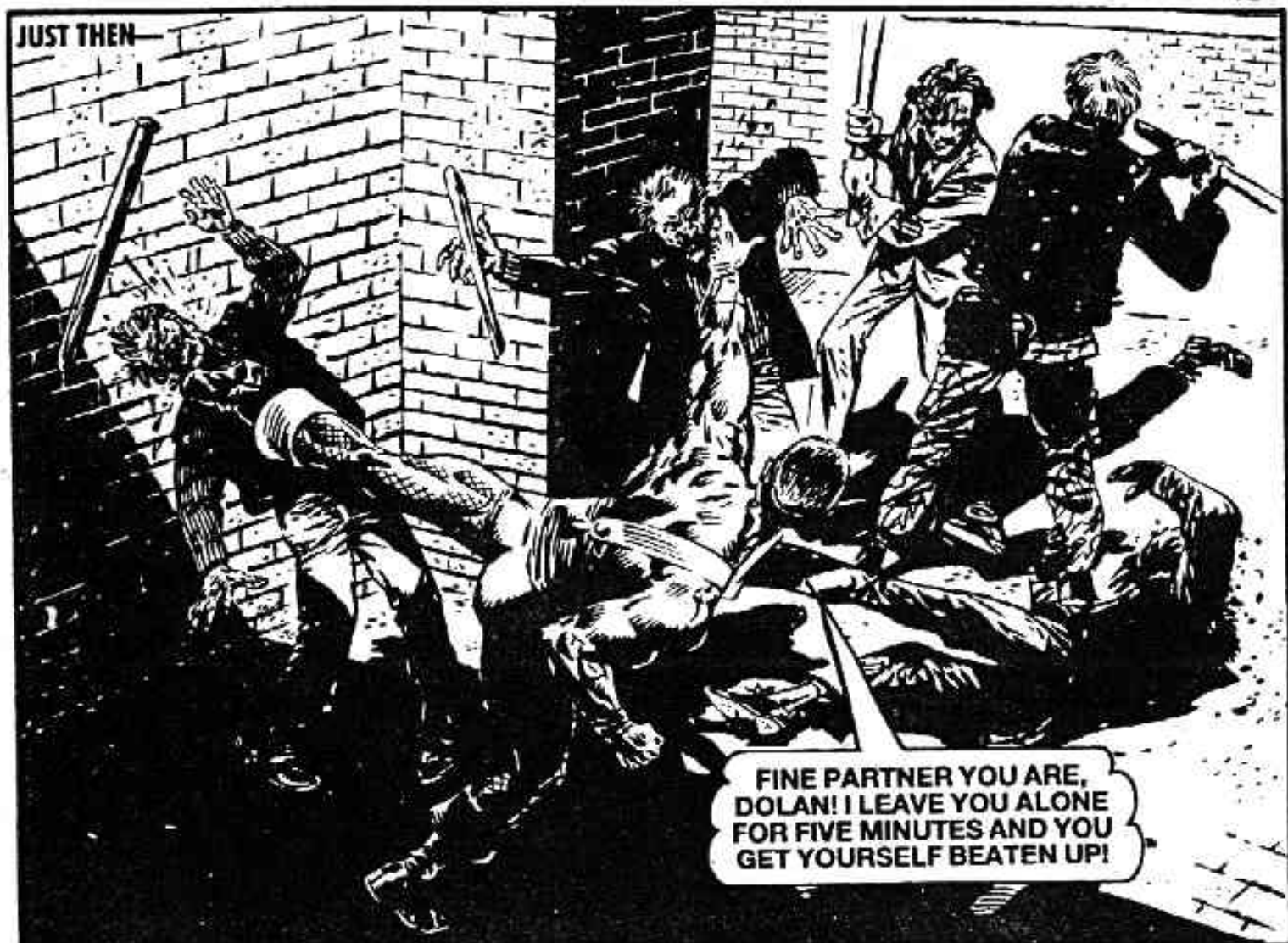
THERE'S ONE
OF THEM!

HOLD IT! WE CAME HERE TO FIND
OUT WHAT'S GOING ON. SO LET'S
DROP THOSE CLUBS AND TALK
ABOUT IT. NOTHING IS EVER GAINED
BY VIOLENCE.



KILL! ... KILL! ... KILL!

JUST THEN—



FINE PARTNER YOU ARE,
DOLAN! I LEAVE YOU ALONE
FOR FIVE MINUTES AND YOU
GET YOURSELF BEATEN UP!

WHEN YOUR ARM IS MADE OF TUNGSTEN
HARDENED METAL, YOU CAN DO TRICKS LIKE
THIS.

YOU'RE UNDER . . . ARREST FOR . . .
ASSAULTING A POLICE OFFICER!

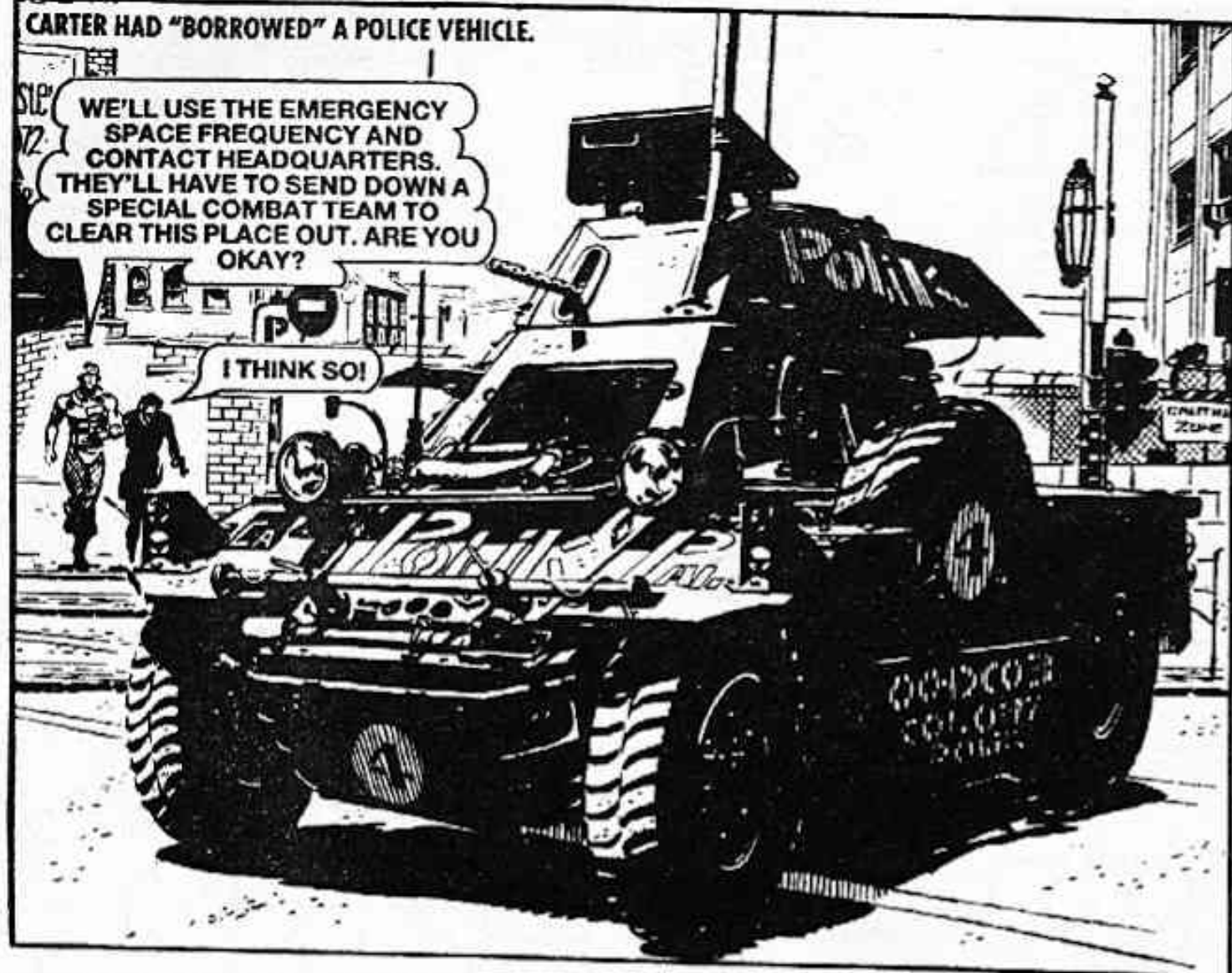
DOLAN . . .
SHUT UP!



CARTER HAD "BORROWED" A POLICE VEHICLE.

WE'LL USE THE EMERGENCY SPACE FREQUENCY AND CONTACT HEADQUARTERS. THEY'LL HAVE TO SEND DOWN A SPECIAL COMBAT TEAM TO CLEAR THIS PLACE OUT. ARE YOU OKAY?

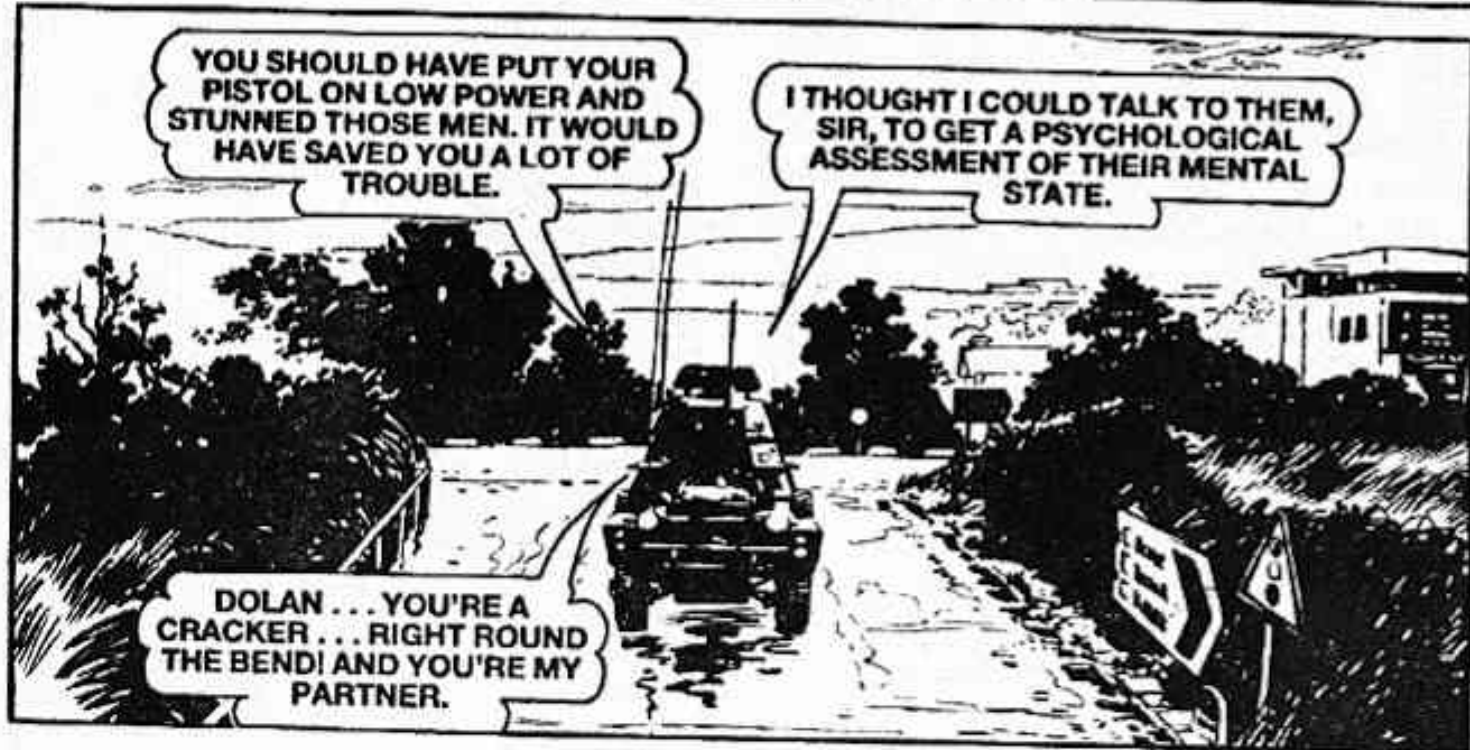
I THINK SO!



YOU SHOULD HAVE PUT YOUR PISTOL ON LOW POWER AND STUNNED THOSE MEN. IT WOULD HAVE SAVED YOU A LOT OF TROUBLE.

I THOUGHT I COULD TALK TO THEM, SIR, TO GET A PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THEIR MENTAL STATE.

DOLAN ... YOU'RE A CRACKER ... RIGHT ROUND THE BEND! AND YOU'RE MY PARTNER.



AS CARTER AND DOLAN MADE THEIR
ESCAPE FROM ALRISHAN, BACK ON
CEROS.

YOU FIND US UNPLEASANT TO
LOOK AT, MR RYKER?

WELL, YOU'RE NO OIL
PAINTING BUT I'LL GET
USED TO YOU. THE TWO
SPORES WE SENT OUT
WERE SUCCESSFUL. YOU
SAW THE DATA?



YES! HOWEVER CARTER SEEMS
TO HAVE BEEN LUCKY.

CARTER IS A SURVIVOR. YOU
WOULD HAVE SEEN THAT HAD
YOU CHECKED THE FEDERAL
SECURITY DATA BANKS.

AND YOU HAVE?

YES!

CARTER IS A MANDROID. EVEN
SOME OF HIS BRAIN CELLS ARE
BIO-ELECTRONIC. WHICH MAKES
HIM BOTH CLEVER AND
DANGEROUS.

HA! HA! HA! YOU'RE
SCARED, RYKER — YOU OF
ALL PEOPLE! WE TOO ARE
SURVIVORS. WE'VE SURVIVED
BILLIONS OF YEARS — AND
NOW OUR INTELLECT HAS
REACHED YOUR LEVEL. WE
CAN DEAL WITH CARTER
ANOTHER TIME.

I HOPE
YOU'RE RIGHT.

CARTER, NOW WITH REINFORCEMENTS,
LED THE ASSAULT ON THE COLONY—

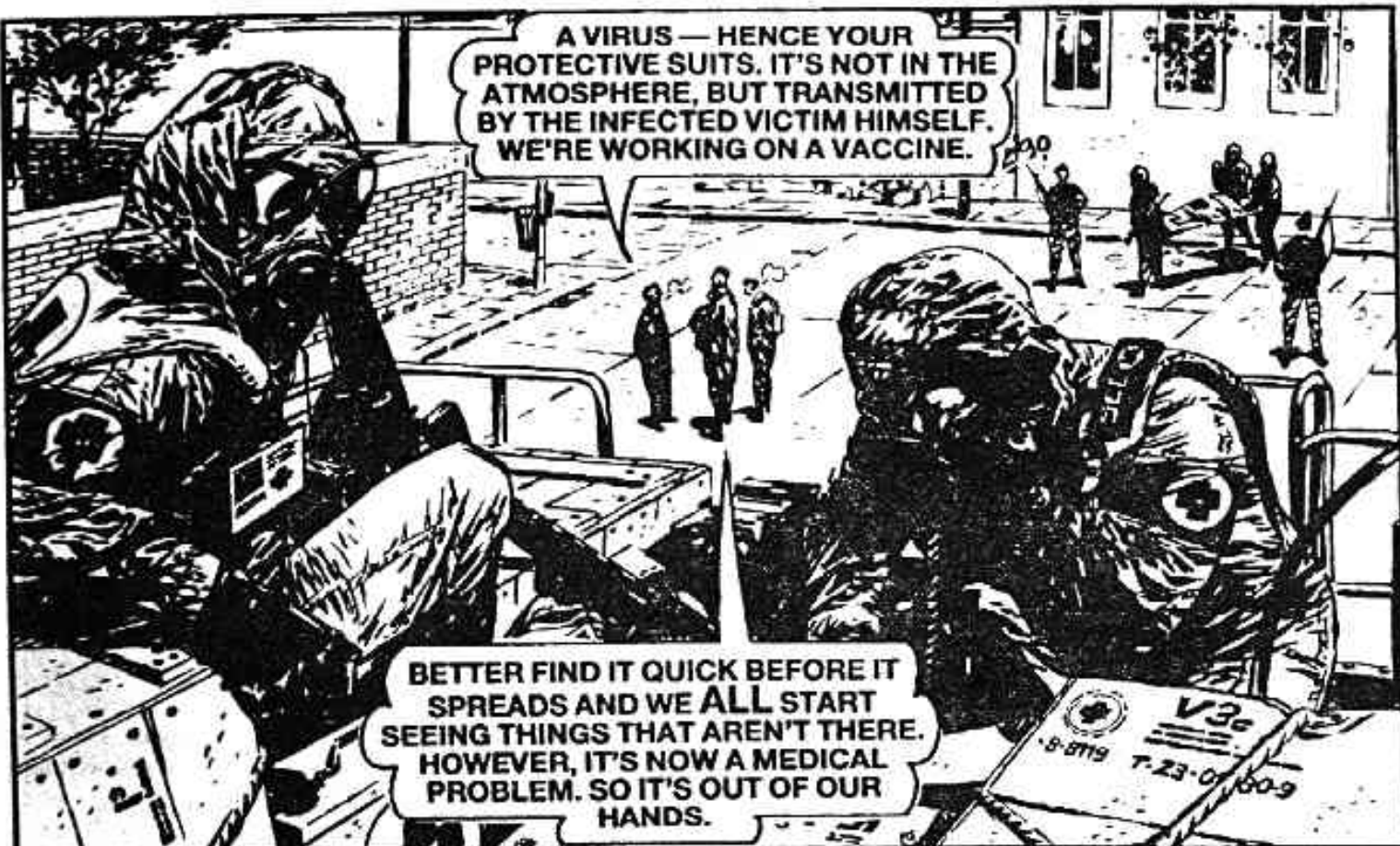
THAT'S THE LAST OF THEM! GET
THE MEDICAR TO PICK HIM UP.

RIGHT, SIR!

THEY'RE ALL STUNNED!
WHAT'S THE VERDICT, DOC?

SOME SORT OF
DELUSIONAL MADNESS.
THEY THINK WE'RE ALIEN
INVADERS.

GREAT! SO WHAT
CAUSED IT?



OKAY, DOLAN. THERE MIGHT BE A CONNECTION, BUT IF YOUR INFORMATION IS WRONG, I'LL HAVE YOU BACK AT COLLEGE SWEEPING FLOORS.



THANK YOU, SIR!

AS CARTER AND DOLAN HEADED FOR RYKER INDUSTRIES, AT AN ORDNANCE FACTORY ON THE PLANET SYGMUS IX...



ANOTHER PHASE OF PROJECT TERMINUS WAS ABOUT TO TAKE PLACE. SOMEHOW, SOMETHING HAD EVADED THE ALARM SYSTEMS GUARDING THE BUILDING AND ENTERED — SOMETHING DEADLY...

WHAT ARE THEY?

SOME FORM OF ALIEN LIFE, BY THE LOOK OF IT! WE'D BETTER SEND OUT A FULL SCALE ALERT! IN THE MEANTIME LET'S SEE HOW THEY LIKE OUR PHOTON BLASTERS.



THE ATTACK CAME FROM ABOVE — AND THE TWO MEN WERE TAKEN BY SURPRISE.



WHAT THE ... ?!!!!

OUR LITTLE FRIENDS GOT RID OF THE GUARD AND OPENED THE DOORS! I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD BE THIS EASY.



GET THOSE WEAPONS LOADED ON THE TRANSPORTER. WE HAVE TO BE OUT OF THIS SECTOR BEFORE THE NEXT PATROL SHIP IS DUE. THEN WE CAN CONGRATULATE OURSELVES!

AN HOUR LATER A SLEEK BLACK SHIP LEFT THE PLANET ...

INTRUDERS! THE VESSEL DOES NOT
RESPOND TO COMMUNICATIONS AND
REFUSES TO IDENTIFY HERSELF.

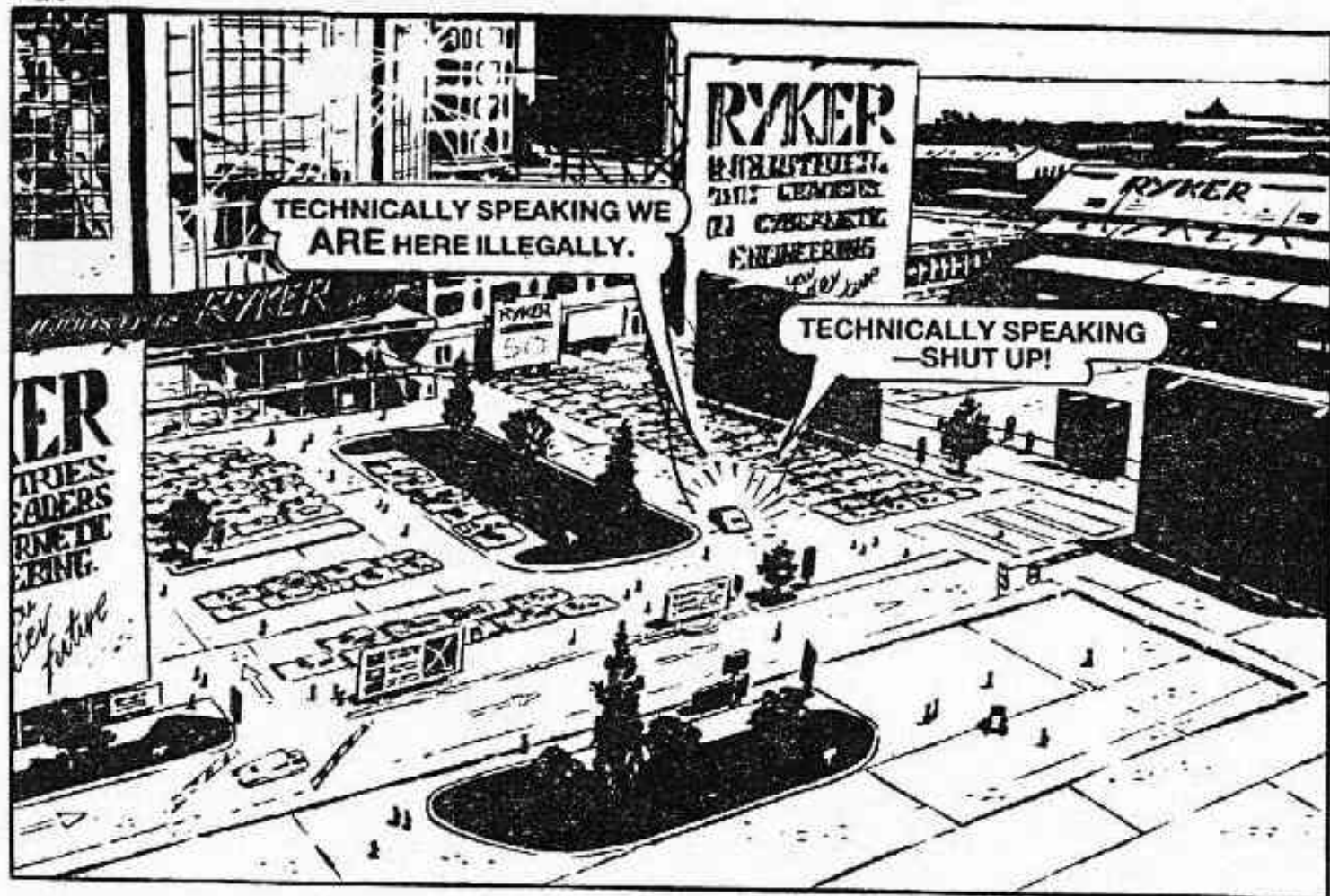
AFFIRMATIVE! FULL BOOST AND
LOCK WEAPONS ON TARGET.
INFORM STARBASE AND TELL THEM
WE'RE GOING IN.

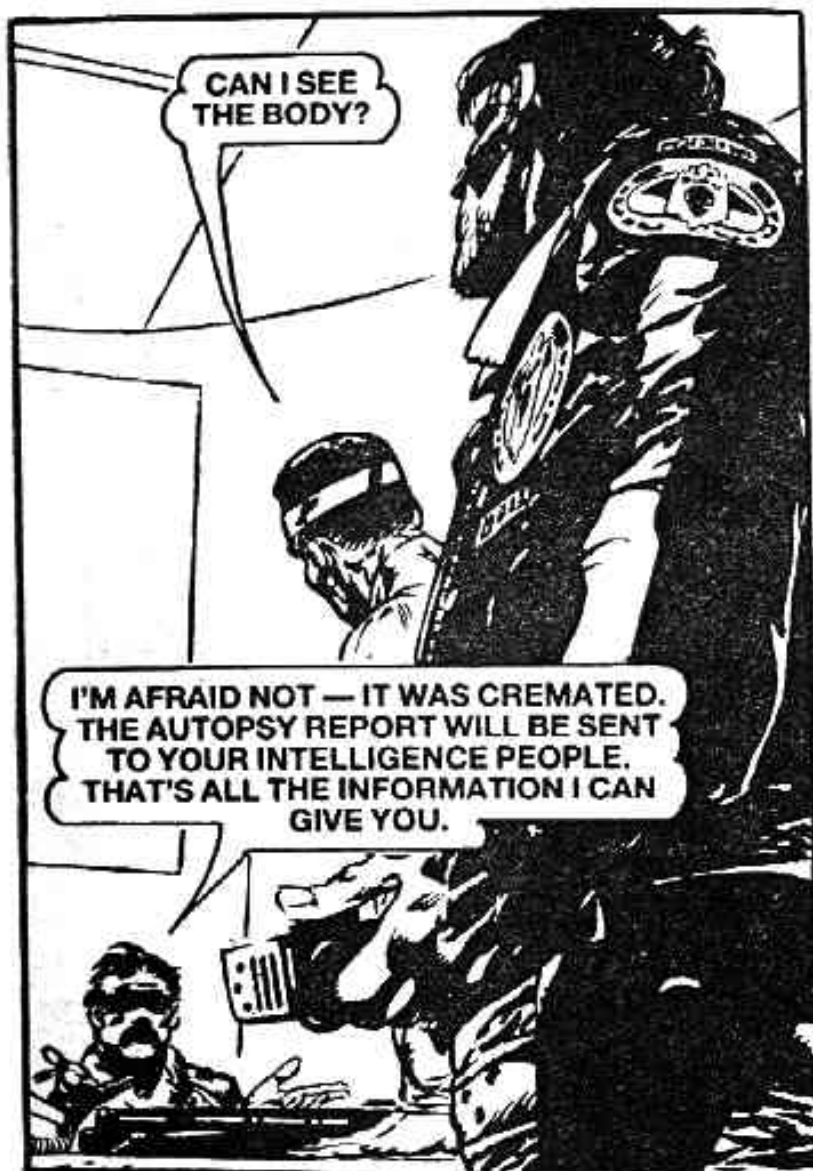
IN A TREMENDOUS SURGE OF POWER THE BLACK SHIP SPED OUT
INTO DEEP SPACE, LEAVING JUST A TRAIL OF HOT EXHAUST GASES.

IT'S GONE! THAT THING MUST
HAVE ACCELERATED TO WARP-
PLUS FIVE IN LESS TIME IT TAKES
YOU TO BLINK AN EYE. ALERT ALL
UNITS IN THIS SECTOR. NOT THAT
IT'LL DO MUCH GOOD.

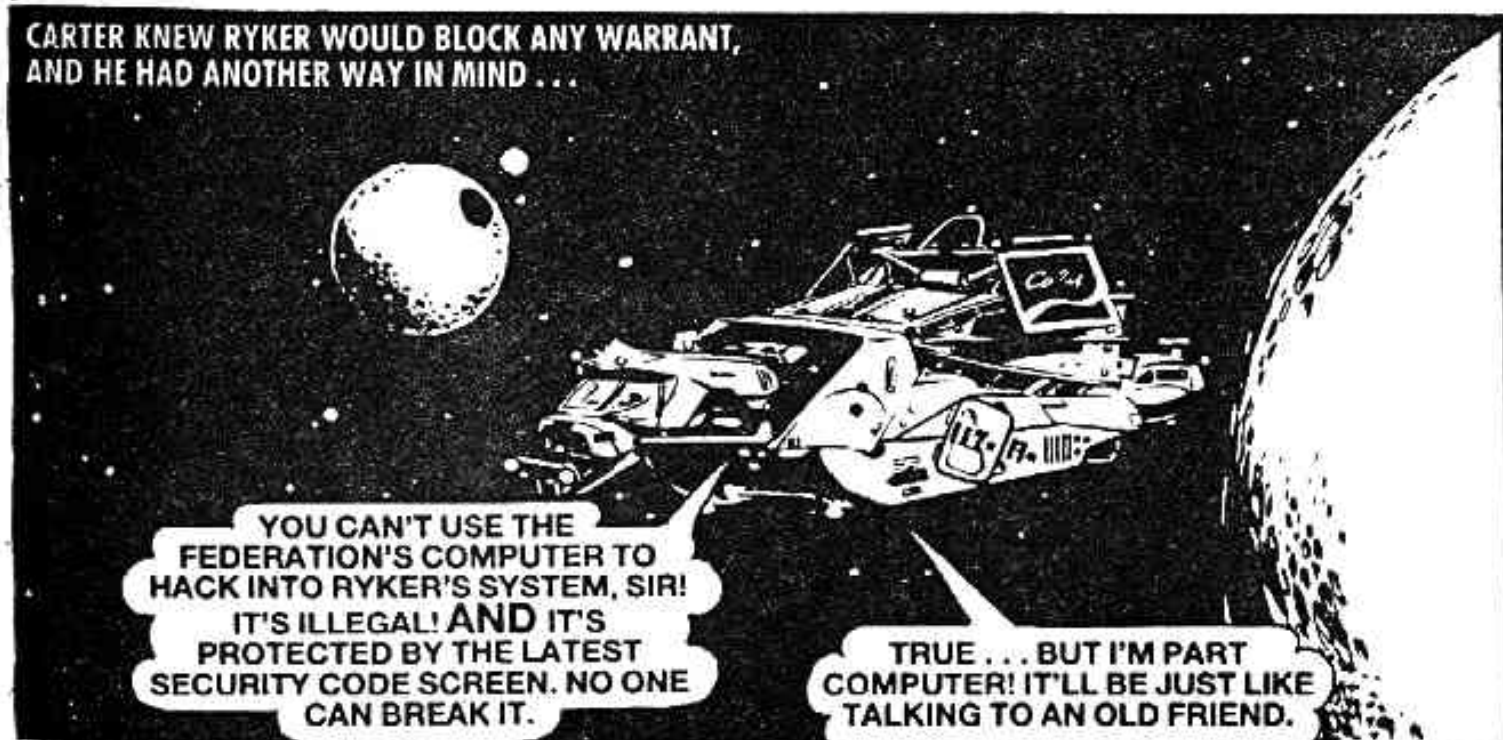
CARTER AND DOLAN ARRIVED ON CEROS—







CARTER KNEW RYKER WOULD BLOCK ANY WARRANT, AND HE HAD ANOTHER WAY IN MIND . . .



UNKNOWN TO CARTER, ALL HIS MOVES WERE FAITHFULLY REPORTED.

WE HAD A VISIT FROM CARTER.

HE IS A FORMIDABLE OPPONENT, SO WE MUST ARRANGE A LITTLE ACCIDENT. AND I HAVE JUST THE THING IN MIND...

THE METAL EATING SPORE WHICH DEVoured THE CARGO SHIP ON THE TEST RUN — IT IS STILL OUT IN SPACE. AND SO IS CARTER. WE MUST ARRANGE A MEETING BETWEEN THEM.

FAR OUT IN SPACE —

A MAN COULD FORGET ALL HIS CARES OUT HERE. PEACE — PERFECT PEACE. JUST SPACE — HOPPING ROUND THE GALAXY. WHEN I RETIRE PERHAPS I'LL JUST DO THAT.

SOUNDS ROMANTIC, SIR.

ROMANTIC!!! NO — JUST A HAVEN FROM ALL THIS LUNACY.



JUST THEN THE ONBOARD COMPUTER REPORTED ...

OBJECT APPROACHING — SPEED
SUBLIGHT-PLUS-FOUR. SENSORS
INDICATE OBJECT IS A LIVING
ORGANISM.

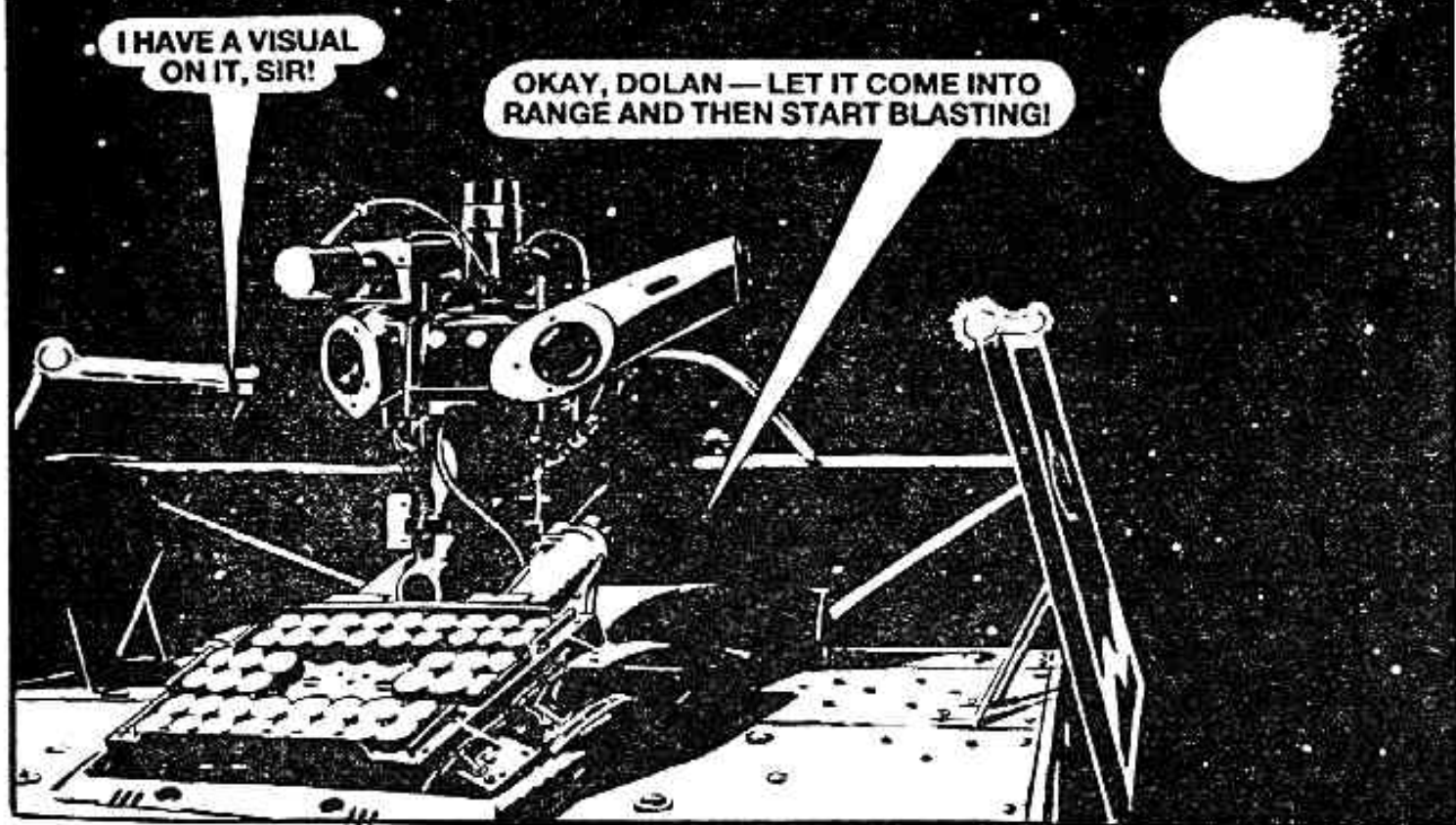
OUT HERE IN
ZERO ATMOSPHERE?



CARTER TURNED THE SHIP TO MEET THE OBJECT, AND ACTIVATED THE PHOTON CANNON.

I HAVE A VISUAL
ON IT, SIR!

OKAY, DOLAN — LET IT COME INTO
RANGE AND THEN START BLASTING!



AN EXPLOSION OF LIGHT PIERCED THE DARKNESS OF SPACE AS THE PHOTON BOLT CONNECTED.

BULLSEYE!

REPORT, COMPUTER!

WHOOF!

TOTAL ANNIHILATION NOT ACHIEVED. OBJECT ABSORBED SOME OF THE ENERGY, LEAVING A CLOUD OF MINUTE RESIDUAL PARTICLES.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND ...

WE DIDN'T KILL THAT THING — WE MERELY BROKE IT UP! GET YOUR SUIT ON WHILE I SEND A GENERAL DISTRESS CALL, WE MAY HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE PRETTY QUICKLY!

FIVE CODE
- PULSE / SYSTEM
FIVE-5
- FIVE SYSTEM:
ALARM
TYPE ?
- PULSE
SOS
- DESTINY?
- PULSE.

THEY PASSED THROUGH THE CLOUD OF PARTICLES —
AND A FEW MINUTES LATER THE ALARM BEGAN TO
SOUND.

**CONDITION RED! HULL
COMPROMISED — PRESSURE FAILING!**

THIS MUST BE WHAT
HAPPENED TO THE "NORTH
STAR"!

CORRECT! WHATEVER ATE
THEM IS NOW EATING US!

THEY FLOATED OUT INTO SPACE—

LOOK AT
THAT, SIR!

HOW CAN I AVOID LOOKING
AT IT? BY THE WAY, MY
NAME IS CARTER, NOT SIR.
A SIR IS A CREEP THAT SITS
BEHIND A DESK. IN MY
BOOK IT'S AN INSULT!

THE DOOMED SHIP BLEW UP —

BLOWING THAT THING APART PROBABLY SAVED US, SIR . . . ER . . . CARTER. HAD IT HIT US IN ONE BIG MASS WE MIGHT NOT HAVE GOT OUT IN TIME.



YEAH — ONLY OUR SITUATION CAN'T EXACTLY BE DESCRIBED AS ROSY. WE'RE FLOATING IN SPACE WITH ABOUT THREE HOURS OF AIR. MAYBE A LITTLE MORE, IF WE STOP TALKING.

IT WAS AN HOUR LATER THAT A MESSAGE CAME THROUGH ON THEIR LONG RANGE RADIO. THE AREA WAS A BUSY TRADE ROUTE BETWEEN SOME NEIGHBOURING PLANETS AND A NUMBER OF SHIPS HAD PICKED UP THEIR DISTRESS CALL.

SIT TIGHT, FEDERATION 225 — WE'RE ON THE WAY!

MAKE IT FAST!

THEY'D BETTER — BECAUSE WE'RE IN BIG TROUBLE! THERE'S A METEORITE STORM APPROACHING!



FROZEN ROCKS, SOME THE SIZE OF MOUNTAINS, HURTTED TOWARDS THEM AT INCREDIBLE SPEED. THERE WAS NO TIME TO DODGE OUT OF THE WAY, SO THEIR ONLY CHANCE WAS TO BREAK THEM UP.

THIS COULD BE A LOT OF FUN!

I SEE MANDROIDS ALSO HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOUR. ONLY YOU'LL PARDON ME IF I DON'T LAUGH.

THEY BLASTED AWAY AT THE METEORITES —

THE SWARM IS GETTING THICKER — WE MUST STILL BE NEAR THE CENTRE!

WATCH OUT!



THE ROCK CAUGHT CARTER A GLANCING BLOW, BUT IT WAS SUFFICIENT TO KNOCK HIM OUT!



IF THAT SHIP DOESN'T COME SOON WE'VE HAD IT! THIS WAS A CRAZY IDEA ANYWAY. NO ONE CAN BLAST THROUGH A METEOR STORM WITH A PISTOL — NOT EVEN THE GREAT CARTER!



BUT A SHIP DID ARRIVE, WITH A MAGNETRON FORCE FIELD ROUND IT PUSHING THE METEORITES AWAY.

RELAX, OFFICERS! WE'LL HAVE YOU ABOARD IN NO TIME.

THANKS! AND TO THINK I PASSED UP THE CHANCE OF A NICE SAFE DESK JOB TO COME ON ACTIVE SERVICE. AFTER THIS I MIGHT JUST RECONSIDER MY DECISION!

ONCE ON THE SHIP —

HOW D'YOU FEEL?

MAD! WE MUST GET RYKER!

RYKER? WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE'S BEHIND THIS? THAT THING THAT ATTACKED US COULD HAVE BEEN SOME FORM OF ALIEN FROM ANOTHER GALAXY.



COULD HAVE! BUT IF THERE IS A COVER UP ON DOC TAYLOR'S DEATH, THEN RYKER MUST HAVE AUTHORISED IT ... AND I WANT TO KNOW WHY!



OKAY ... SO WHAT DO WE DO?

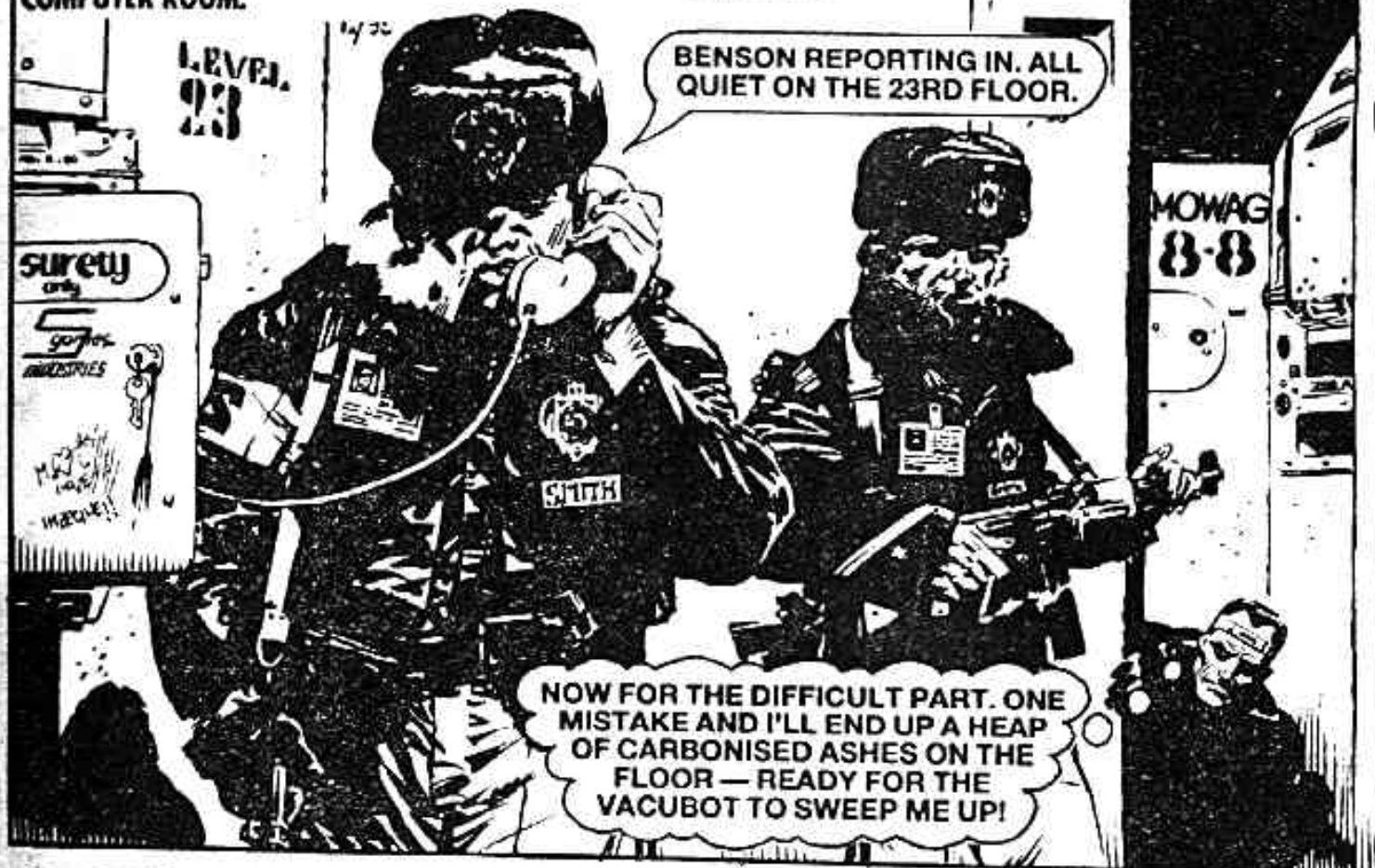
YOU DO NOTHING! I'M GOING TO HACK INTO THAT COMPUTER. THIS IS UNAUTHORISED — SO I'LL DO IT ON MY OWN. NO POINT US BOTH GETTING KICKED OFF THE FORCE IF THINGS GO WRONG.

AFTER REPORTING BACK TO HEADQUARTERS, CARTER PAID A VISIT TO THE FEDERATION CENTRAL DATA CENTRE ...



THIS IS THE ONLY WEAK POINT IN THE SECURITY SYSTEM — AND I'M GOING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THAT.

ONCE INSIDE THE BUILDING, CARTER MADE HIS WAY TO THE MAIN COMPUTER ROOM.



THE MASSIVE DATA PROCESSOR WAS A HACKER'S NIGHTMARE. IF A USER DIDN'T KNOW THE RIGHT SECURITY CLEARANCE CODE HE FACED THE PROSPECT OF HAVING TEN-MILLION VOLTS FED THROUGHT THE INPUT CONSOLE AND INTO HIS BODY...



CARTER INTENDED TO BYPASS THE INPUT CONSOLE AND HOOK HIMSELF DIRECTLY INTO THE COMPUTER.



THE ANTI-HACKING DEFENCE WAS PROGRAMMED TO DETECT UNAUTHORISED ENTRY, BUT CARTER HAD SERIES 807 PARTS AND THE COMPUTER TOOK HIM FOR ANOTHER COMPUTER.

THIS IS A ROUTINE REQUEST ... A MAINTENANCE CHECK. SOME OF THE DATA MAY HAVE BEEN CORRUPTED. THIS IS AN INTERNAL SYSTEMS CONNECTION. CLASSIFIED MATERIAL WILL REMAIN SECURE.



A SURGE OF ENERGY PASSED THROUGH THE
CABLE AND INTO CARTER'S BIONIC ARM!

AAAAARRRRRRRRRGGGGGGG!



DOLAN WASN'T FAR AWAY —

CARTER HASN'T MUCH
CHANCE OF GETTING AWAY
WITH HIS INFORMATION. MAYBE
I CAN HELP.



INSIDE THE BUILDING, THE PULSE OF ENERGY TRANSFERRED DATA, IN PLASMA CODE, TO THE ELECTRONIC CHIPS INSIDE CARTER'S HEAD — THE RESULT OF SOME VERY TRICKY SURGERY TO IMPLANT SERIES 807 MEMORY CELLS.

DO YOU NEED ANY FURTHER INFORMATION?

NEGATIVE! THANKS FOR YOUR HELP.

YOU'RE WELCOME! WE SERIES 807'S HAVE TO STICK TOGETHER.

THOSE VERY SAME CHIPS HAD FOOLED THE COMPUTER INTO THINKING IT WAS TALKING TO ANOTHER MACHINE.



BUT IN HIS GROGGY STATE, CARTER TRIGGERED ONE OF THE ALARMS.

INTRUDER ON LEVEL 22!



CARTER WAS ARMED — BUT HE WASN'T ABOUT TO SHOOT A FEDERATION EMPLOYEE. HE WAS IN ENOUGH TROUBLE AS IT WAS.





CARTER USED HIS POWERFUL ARMS TO SMASH THROUGH THE TOUGHENED PLASTI-GLASS WINDOW.

HERE'S TO A
SAFE LANDING!





HE'S ON THE ROOF OF
THE ADMIN BLOCK!

HOW DID HE BREAK
THROUGH THIS WINDOW?

CARTER HAD STUDIED THE
BLUEPRINTS OF THE COMPLEX, AND
KNEW WHERE EVERY POSSIBLE
ESCAPE ROUTE LAY.



BY NOW THEY MUST HAVE ALERTED THE
CITY POLICE AND THE FEDERATION
INVESTIGATION DIVISION! AND WHEN
THOSE BOYS ARRIVE I'M IN **REAL**
TROUBLE — UNLESS I CAN GET CLEAR OF
THIS AREA FIRST.

AS SNOW BEGAN TO FALL HEAVILY, CARTER WAS EASILY PICKED OUT BY A SEARCHLIGHT.

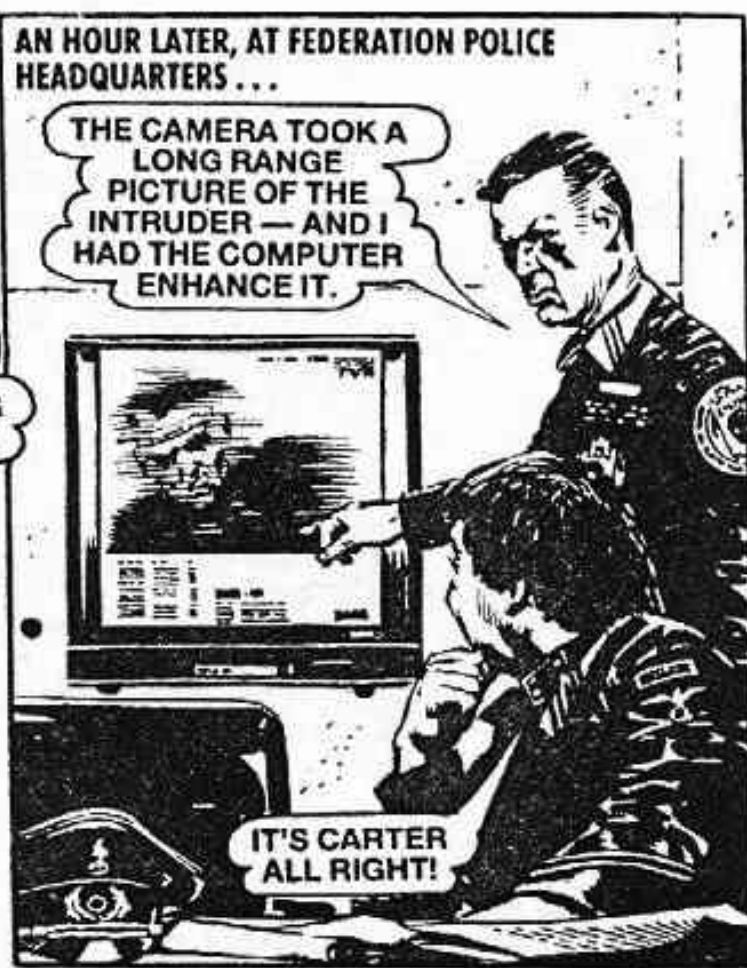
HALT — OR YOU'RE A DEAD MAN!

OH-OH! IT LOOKS LIKE THIS IS ABOUT AS FAR AS I GET!

AT THAT MOMENT THE SECURITY GUARDS HEARD THE WHINE OF PLASMA TURBINE ENGINE. IT WAS A TERRANCAR HEADING TOWARDS THEM AT HIGH SPEED.

WHAT THE . . . ? THE POLICE — HERE ALREADY!





RYKER HAD BEEN MONITORING POLICE FREQUENCY, AND IT DIDN'T TAKE HIM LONG TO FIND OUT WHAT HAD HAPPENED.



SO CARTER IS PAYING US ANOTHER VISIT.

HE WON'T GET THROUGH OUR DEFENCES.



I NO LONGER TRUST YOUR ABILITY, MR RYKER. FROM NOW ON I WILL TAKE CONTROL.

YOU WILL SPEED UP THE REGENERATION MODULES. IT IS IMPORTANT WE CREATE OTHERS LIKE ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. AND YOU WILL SEND OUT YOUR GUARD SHIPS TO DESTROY CARTER BEFORE HE GETS HERE!

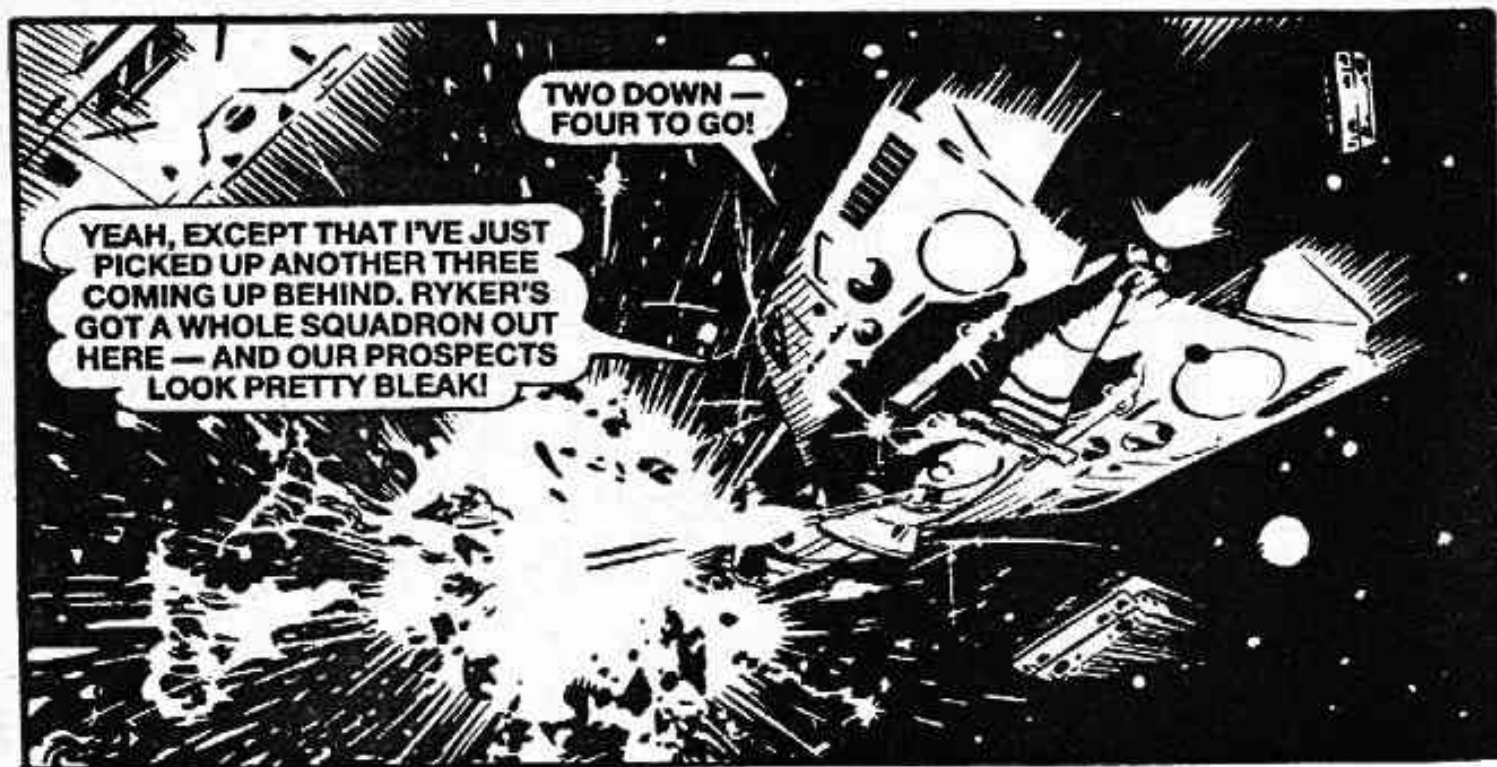


AS CARTER AND DOLAN APPROACHED CEROS...

CONTACTS BEARING 390!
VISUAL DISPLAY ON SCANNER.



FIGHTERS — ONLY THEY'RE NOT THE STANDARD MILITARY CRAFT. I HAVE A FEELING RYKER HAS SENT A RECEPTION COMMITTEE TO GREET US THIS TIME.



RYKER WAS FOLLOWING EVERY MOVE.

CLOSING IN ON TARGET! WE
HAVE THEM BOXED IN REAL
TIGHT!

HA! HA! HA! THIS TIME
CARTER WON'T GET AWAY!



SOON THE FEDERATION'S RULE
OVER THE GALAXY WILL END!
THEN A NEW MASTER WILL
EMERGE — RYKER INDUSTRIES!
ALL SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY WILL BE UNDER
MY CONTROL. AND THOSE WHO
RESIST WILL BE DESTROYED!

ER



BUT...


WE'VE LOST THEM, MR RYKER!
THEY BLASTED TWO OF OUR
FIGHTERS AND WENT INTO WARP-
DRIVE. BY THE TIME WE FOLLOWED
THEY'D GONE!



WHAT?



BUT DOLAN KNEW WHAT HE WAS DOING —



THAT WAS MORE FUN THAN
SHOOTING AT METEORITES.

ONLY METEORITES DON'T SHOOT BACK,
DOLAN. THAT LAST HIT ALMOST VAPORISED
OUR HULL. AND WE'RE NOT MEANT TO ENTER
ATMOSPHERE AT WARP DRIVE!



I KNOW ... BUT A CRASH LANDING
HAS A MARGINALLY HIGHER
SUCCESS RATE THAN A SUICIDE
DOGFIGHT.

YEAH, WELL, JUST GET US DOWN IN
ONE PIECE!

BUT THEIR PROBLEMS WEREN'T OVER — IN FACT THEY WERE JUST STARTING. SPACE PILOTS HAD AVOIDED CEROS LIKE THE PLAGUE...

ATTENTION! DUST STORM
APPROACHING. SPEED ESTIMATED
AT 400 KNOTS.

BETTER GAIN SOME ALTITUDE! AND
MAKE IT FAST!

TOO LATE!

IMPACT IMMINENT!

I'M GOING TO EJECT THE
COCKPIT MODULE — SO GET
READY!

POWERFUL JETS LIFTED THE COCKPIT SECTION FROM THE HULL — IT WAS THEIR ONLY CHANCE TO AVOID THE MASSIVE EXPLOSION WHICH WOULD OCCUR WHEN THE MAIN CRAFT HIT THE GROUND.



MEANWHILE...

SO THEY REACHED THE PLANET AFTER ALL!

IT WAS SHEER LUCK, THAT'S ALL! AND NOW THEY'VE CRASHED IN A SAND STORM. THAT SHOULD HAVE FINISHED THEM.



LUCK? NO, I DON'T THINK SO, MISTER RYKER. IT WAS SHEER INCOMPETENCE ON THE PART OF YOUR MEN — AND YOU! THE NEW RULER OF THE GALAXY AND YOU CAN'T EVEN STOP TWO MEN!

HOW DARE YOU TALK TO ME LIKE THAT!



**I CREATED YOU ...
AAAGGGHHH!**

AND YOU USED DOCTOR TAYLOR'S BRAINS TO DO IT! YOU'RE A USER, RYKER, GAINING POWER ON THE BACKS OF OTHERS.

RYKER SUDDENLY REALISED THAT HE WAS NO LONGER IN CONTROL —

YOU WILL SEND OUT A
SEARCH PARTY TO FIND
THAT SHIP. IF THERE ARE
SURVIVORS YOU WILL
DESTROY THEM!


UNDERSTOOD!

A GENETIC MUTATION WAS IN CONTROL, A GIANT BACTERIA WITH THE POWER OF INTELLIGENT THOUGHT. ONE OF RYKER'S PROBES INTO DEEP SPACE HAD DISCOVERED A FEW SPARES ON AN ALIEN PLANET. DOCTOR TAYLOR HAD DEVELOPED THE BACTERIA AND FOUND IT POSSESSED SPECIAL PROPERTIES. BUT THEN RYKER HAD DECIDED TO USE THEM FOR HIS OWN EVIL ENDS.

NOT TOO FAR AWAY —

LUCKY WE HAD OUR SUITS ON —
OR WE'D HAVE SUFFOCATED
UNDER THAT SAND. NOT THAT IT
MATTERS.

DON'T TELL
ME YOU'RE
GIVING UP!




WE'VE JUST LOST OUR SHIP AND
NOW YOU'RE GOING TO SUGGEST
WE BREAK INTO THAT LAB AND
ARREST RYKER.

THAT'S RIGHT!

YOU'RE NOT JUST CRAZY —
YOU'RE A RAVING LUNATIC!

JUST THEN ...



DUST! THEY MUST HAVE
TRACKED US ON ENTRY — AND
NOW THEY'RE COMING TO PICK
US UP.

THE OBVIOUS AGAIN. LET'S LAY
ON A LITTLE WELCOME FOR
THEM. THAT'S IF YOU'RE STILL A
PART OF THIS MISSION, MR
DOLAN.

WHEN THE PATROL CRAFT ARRIVED —

NO SIGN OF
ANY WRECKAGE.

JUST THEIR BODIES. THEY COULD
HAVE BEEN BLOWN OUT WHEN THE
SHIP WENT UP — WHO CARES?
LET'S GET THEM ABOARD.

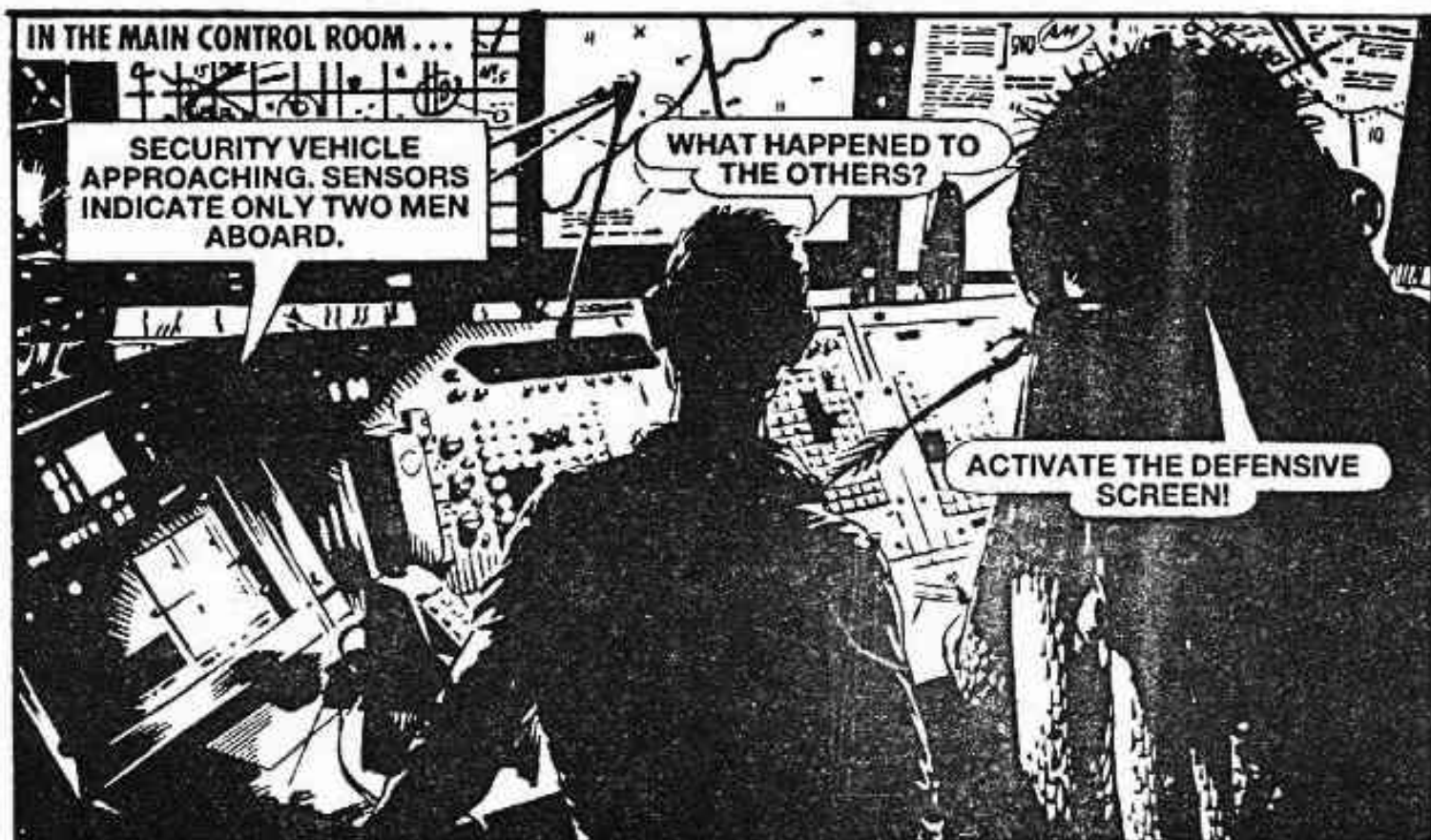
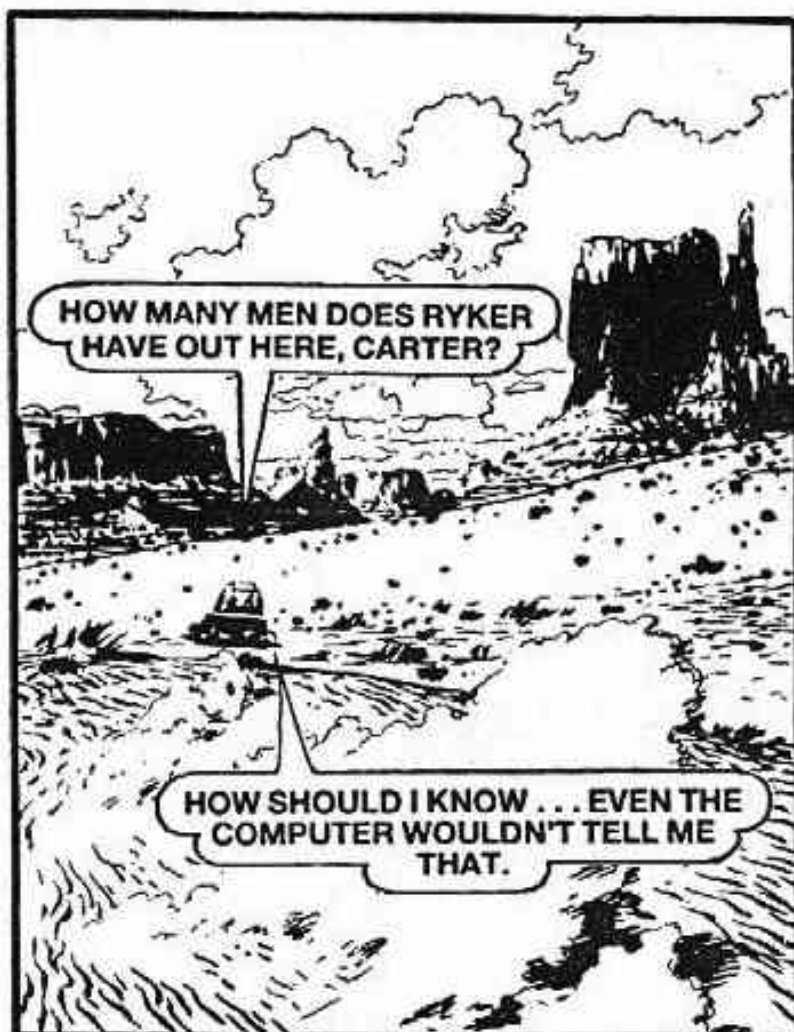


SUDDENLY—

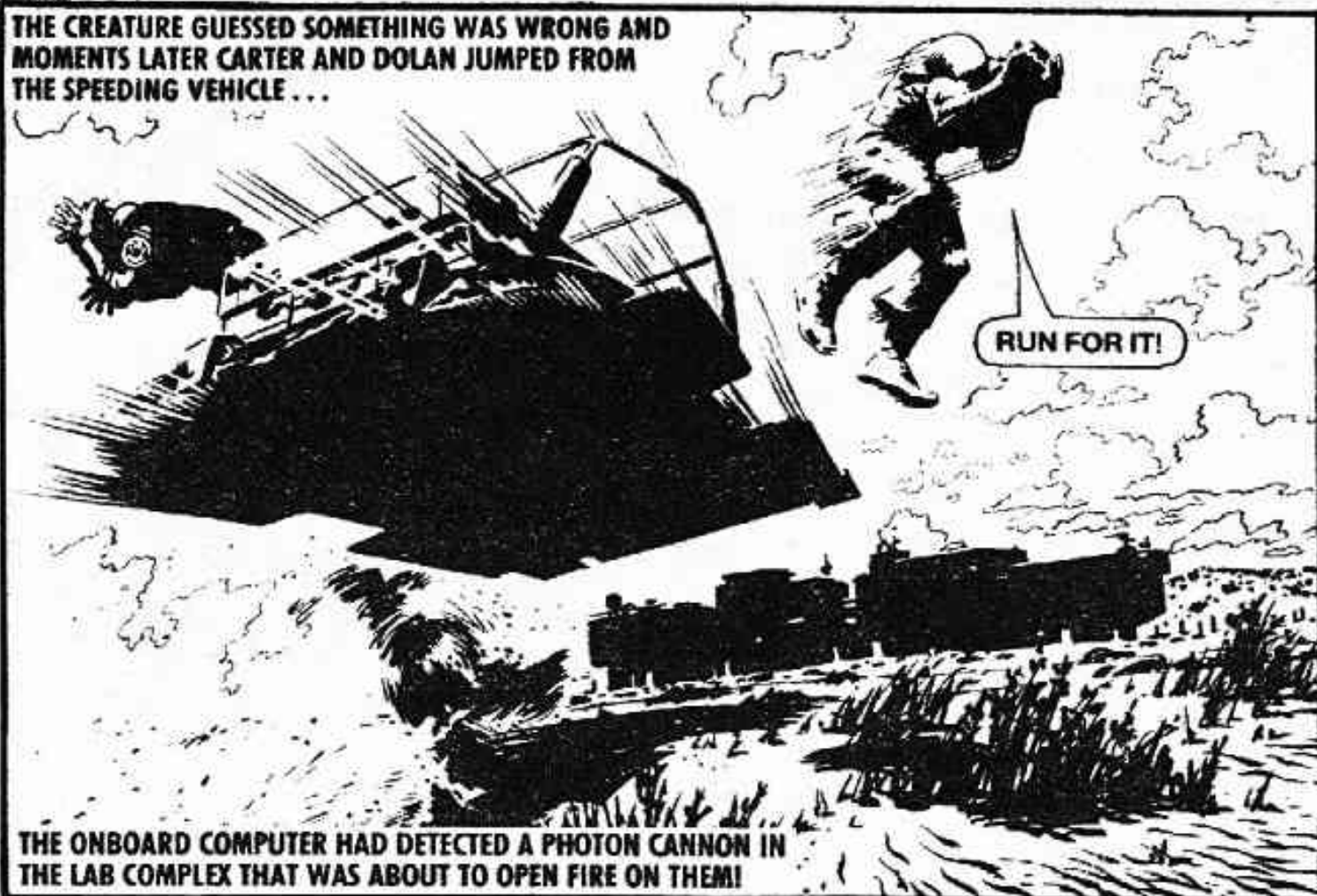
DROP YOUR WEAPONS,
GENTLEMEN! AT THIS RANGE EVEN
A SHORT-SIGHTED SWAMP RAT
COULDN'T MISS!

YOU FELL FOR A COUPLE
OF EMPTY SPACE SUITS.
NEAT, DON'T YOU THINK?





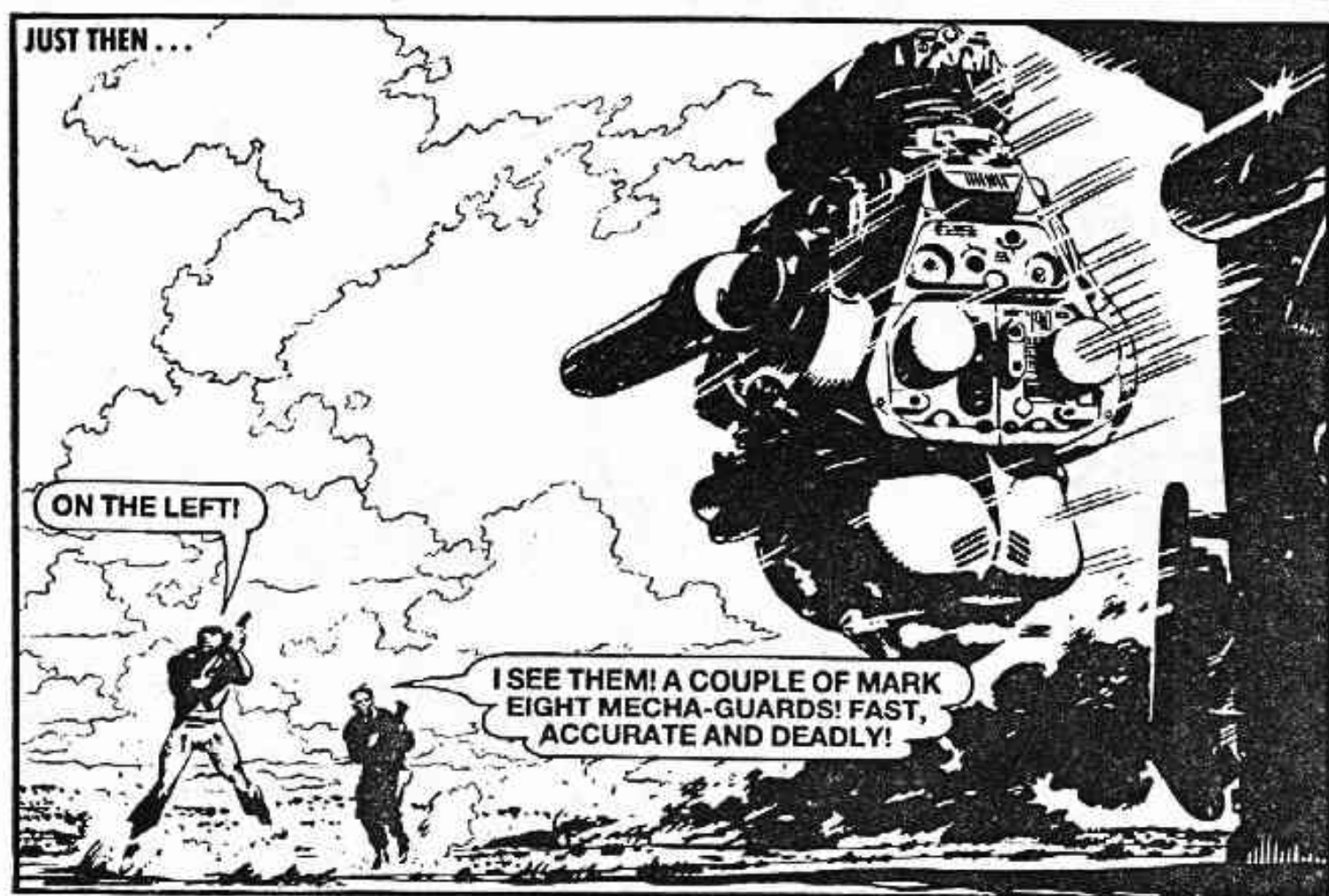
THE CREATURE GUESSED SOMETHING WAS WRONG AND MOMENTS LATER CARTER AND DOLAN JUMPED FROM THE SPEEDING VEHICLE...



THE ONBOARD COMPUTER HAD DETECTED A PHOTON CANNON IN THE LAB COMPLEX THAT WAS ABOUT TO OPEN FIRE ON THEM!

AS THE VEHICLE EXPLODED THE BLAST WAVE KNOCKED THEM DOWN.





THE FIRST TWO ROBOTS WERE EASY — BUT THEN THEY HAD BEEN PARTIALLY CONFUSED BY THE SMOKE FROM THE EXPLOSION.



WE'RE TOO CLOSE TO THE BUILDING FOR THEM TO USE THE PHOTON CANNON — SO ALL WE HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ARE THE ROBOTS!

GREAT! FOR A MOMENT I THOUGHT WE MIGHT BE IN TROUBLE, SIR!

MORE OF THE MECHA-GUARDS ARRIVED. PRODUCTS OF RYKER INDUSTRIES, THEY WERE BUILT AND PROGRAMMED FOR ONE PURPOSE — TO KILL!



DOLAN!



CARTER BLASTED HIS WAY INTO THE BUILDING. HE HAD SEEN DOLAN FALL, AND HE REMEMBERED THE OTHER INNOCENT VICTIMS. NOW HE WAS DRIVEN BY A BURNING DESIRE FOR REVENGE.

HEAR ME, RYKER! I'M COMING TO GET YOU! AND THERE'S NOWHERE LEFT FOR YOU TO HIDE!



HE'S DESTROYING EVERYTHING! BUT HOW...?



YOUR DOCTORS REBUILT HIM AFTER THE ACCIDENT — REMEMBER? HE'S A PRODUCT OF YOUR GREAT TECHNOLOGY! IRONIC HE SHOULD BE THE ONE WHO BRINGS RYKER INDUSTRIES TO ITS KNEES!

HE'S IN THE MAIN LABORATORY! AND HE'S KILLING MY FELLOW CREATURES WHO ARE STILL IN THEIR GROWTH CHAMBERS! NO... THIS CANNOT HAPPEN! NOT WHEN WE WERE SO CLOSE!



WHEN CARTER REACHED THE CONTROL ROOM HE FOUND RYKER SLUMPED IN A CHAIR, A BROKEN MAN. BUT THE DANGER WAS FAR FROM OVER ...

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!

HE'S FINISHED, CARTER — AND SO ARE YOU! I WILL KILL YOU AS I KILLED TAYLOR! SLOWLY AND PAINFULLY!

FOR THE FIRST TIME CARTER REALISED JUST WHAT HE WAS UP AGAINST.

OF THE MILLIONS WHICH WOULD HAVE SPAWNED, ONLY I SURVIVE! AND ONCE I HAVE ESCAPED THE WORK WILL CONTINUE — FOR THERE WILL BE OTHERS WHO SHARE RYKER'S LUST FOR POWER!

AT THAT MOMENT ...

DOLAN!
I THOUGHT ...

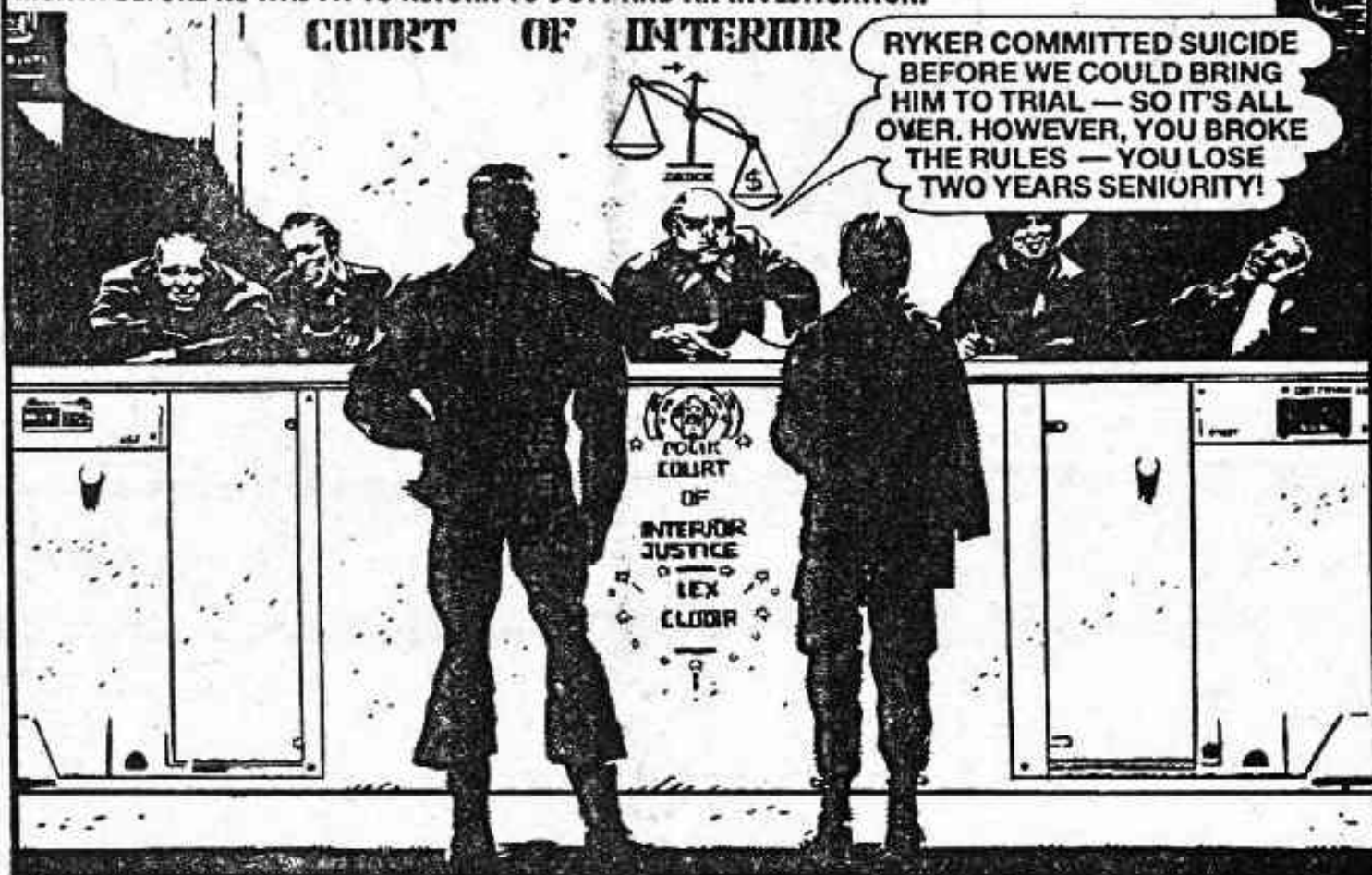
EVEN YOU CAN BE WRONG, SIR — ALTHOUGH I MUST CONFESS I FEEL A BIT WEAK! I ... THINK I NEED A ...
MEDIC!

THE COMPLEX HAD A CLINIC AND A MEDI-DROID PATCHED DOLAN UP. EVEN SO IT WAS ALMOST A MONTH BEFORE HE WAS FIT TO RETURN TO DUTY AND AN INVESTIGATION.

COURT OF INTERIOR



RYKER COMMITTED SUICIDE BEFORE WE COULD BRING HIM TO TRIAL — SO IT'S ALL OVER. HOWEVER, YOU BROKE THE RULES — YOU LOSE TWO YEARS SENIORITY!



I DID WHAT I THOUGHT WAS RIGHT, SIR. I HAVE NO REGRETS SIR, AND, WE COMPLETED OUR CASE, SIR.

THREE "SIRS" IN ONE SENTENCE, DOLAN. MAYBE THERE'S HOPE FOR YOU YET.



We at "Starblazer" want to bring you the very best in Fantasy Fiction. To do that we need *your* help.

So that we can produce the kind of stories you want to read, please fill in the questionnaire on this page and send it to "Starblazer", D. C. Thomson & Co. Ltd., 185 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2HS.

If you don't want to cut your issue of "Starblazer", you can copy the questionnaire onto a sheet of paper.

And there's a chance to win a full-colour print of one of our new-style wraparound covers!

The senders of the ten letters which we judge to be the most informative will each receive one of the prints. We want to hear from you NOW!

Name **Age**

Address

What kind of science fiction do you most enjoy?

Please tick

appropriate boxes.

If you dislike any type of story, place a cross in the box.

SUPERHEROES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FANTASY		
DUNGEONS			SWORD AND		
AND DRAGONS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SORCERY		
			POST	<input type="checkbox"/>	HORROR
HOLOCAUST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	STAR WARS		
ADVENTURE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DR. WHO		
HUMOUR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MYSTERY		

Where do you normally buy your STARBLAZER? _____

Which is your favourite STARBLAZER story? _____

Which is your favourite character? _____

Which is your favourite science fiction movie? _____

Have you any comments to make about STARBLAZER... good or bad? _____

CARTER'S LAW

Frank Carter was a policeman in the huge Terran galaxy of the 32nd century. His job was hard, lonely and extremely dangerous. But he didn't mind — the harder, lonelier and more dangerous a job was, the more he liked it. Carter was hated by some, and disliked by most, but he was used to it. He was half man, half android and completely mean.

